

Survival

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Summary: Chibi Vegeta gets into a situation that he can't get himself out of.

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Prince Vegeta stopped the attack he was in the middle of firing and looked around him again. The eight-year-old warrior was occupying a planet for Frieza, alone. It had been the second time he'd been distracted that morning. A strange apprehensive feeling passed over him. He shook it off like he had done previously and set back about his work.

Vegeta sighed exhausted. He'd finished off the remaining few inhabitants still alive on the Southern Hemisphere of the planet then went off to find a corpse to eat.

—

After lunch, it will be on to the Northern Hemisphere. I should be out of here by tomorrow afternoon if I really push myself.

—

Vegeta smiled as he spotted a large member of the species ready for

him to start munching on. He sat on the corpse's back and went about tearing off an arm.

His head snapped up in reflex. He'd felt the sensation again. He looked around nervously for a few seconds then growled in frustration.

—

Why am I being such a coward? I know there's absolutely nothing on this planet that can hurt me.

—

He looked around again. \_Stillâ€|\_

He pulled out his scouter from under his armor and put it on.

—

I'm being silly, I checked yesterday and there's nothing even remotely near my power level. But if it will help me calm my nerves I'll use it.

—

The scouter immediately started beeping when the Prince turned it on. He jumped up and looked in the direction of the power reading.

—

\_It's stronger than mine is.\_ Vegeta worried. His eight-year-old imagination immediately ran away with itself, posing all kinds of horrible scenarios. But, his disciplined warrior mind quickly stepped in and put a stop to his imagination with a logical explanation.

—

\_Frieza probably just sent a fellow warrior to check on me. Humph! I don't need to be checked up on.\_ Vegeta relaxed awaiting the warrior's arrival.

Suddenly, something dropped from the sky behind him. He whirled around to look and recoiled instantly at what he saw. A man stood in front of him. But not just any man, he was a native of one of the planets he had single-handedly destroyed a long time ago. He was slender and had green skin like Zarbon's. Only he wasn't the same race as Zarbon. The facial features were distinctly different, almost cat-like. Vegeta stared at the creature stupefied.

—

I thought I'd killed d them all. And how is it that he's so strong? They were weak when I fought them.

—

The creature laughed softly at the Prince's reactions and more voices

joined in. Vegeta then found himself surrounded by a total of four of the creatures.

He was about to run in order to gain a safer attack point, but the creatures anticipated this. They all powered up and shot him at once from four different directions. As a result, Vegeta collapsed to the ground unconscious.

The female cat warrior awoke from her meditation by the sound of quiet moaning. The Prisoner she was guarding was waking up. She unfolded her long legs and lowered herself from the air to the grassy terrain and walked over to him.

Vegeta tried to push himself up off the floor of the cage he was in but couldn't. His arms were restrained behind his back and no matter how hard he struggled to free them they stayed put. He growled furiously and tried to blast the shackles off with energy but that was no use either. The shackles were designed to withstand such power. He tried forcing them off again to no avail. He was livid. He was a prince and wasn't just going to sit there and be restrained.

The Female chuckled, amused at his antics. Vegeta managed to sit up and glare at her.

"Who are you? Why are you doing this to me?" He demanded. He didn't understand why they hadn't just killed him. That seemed to be the obvious revenge. What they were doing to him now was frightening him more than the threat of death would have.

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I'm at their mercy and I've killed their planet, they could do anything to me.

—

"Don't be afraid, Prince Vegeta, we're not going to hurt you." She stressed the word we're, telling Vegeta that perhaps someone else was going to hurt him later on.

Vegeta was shocked at her response. "How..how did you know my name?" Vegeta demanded.

"Oh, we've had our eye on you for a long time, little Saiyan. We just needed the right opportunity."

Vegeta was losing his temper. He didn't like being afraid and he was very afraid by this woman's talk. He was unnerved by the fact that he'd been stalked and not realized it until too late.

"Why are you doing this to me?" He demanded a second time. She hadn't answered his question.

"You'll find out soon enough." The woman smiled evilly. Then she turned to go back to her meditation.

"I WANT AN ANSWER!"

"Believe me, you don't."

"DON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT I WANT OR DON'T WANT, YOU LOW CLASS SCUM!"

The woman blasted an energy ball at him. He had no way to dodge or block it, so it collided with his chest and knocked the wind out of him.

"You need to calm down." The woman replied. "And, no offense, but who's the low level scum here? Me, the one obviously holding all the cards, or you, the pathetic little creature lying in the cage?"

Vegeta sat up gasping and looked at the floor in humiliation. He had been raised to be independent and authoritative, but for the second time in his short life he felt himself to be completely helpless.

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\_Whatever they're going to do to me can't be much worse than my life as Frieza's slave. It's not like they're taking away my freedom. \_His attempt to comfort himself did not work.

The woman walked back towards him and sat down on the ground next to the cage.

"I suppose it doesn't matter if I tell you or not. You don't have a choice. So, here goes, but if I were in your position, I think I would rather not knowing this."

She stretched and yawned then settled in for what Vegeta expected to be along and detailed story. He wasn't in the mood for that, but like she said, he didn't have a choice but to listen

"A few year s ago, you killed my home planet. But, my friends and I survived. I won't bore you with the circumstances of how we managed that. Since the destruction of our planet we've been doing a little bit of pirating work, much like you do only we work mostly with livestock. Anyway, we got a request from not one but two potential customers regarding you a few months back. Seems a group of people survived one of your killing sprees recently and aren't as forgiving as us. This group wants revenge for their planet and has offered to pay a great deal of money for you. However, we do have another bidder for you. He's quite a nice guy actually and he just likes collecting rare species of aliens and since there are very few Saiyans left in the universe, he considers such a rare creature as yourself to be a worthy investment. He asked for you in particular since you're so young and he mentioned something about breeding too. Anyway, it doesn't matter to us who we sell you to. All that matters is the amount we get for you. Now, I know that neither scenario appealing to a prince like you, but if it were me in this situation I'd be spending all my time praying that the creature collector has more cash than those revenge seekers. I doubt they're just going to kill you and be done with you quickly, if you know what I mean." She got up and paced in front of his cage. Vegeta regretted demanding to know why he was being held against his will. But, he wasn't giving up just yet.

"You know," he stated " I'm a favorite of Frieza, he's not going to

like the fact that you captured and sold me."

She shrugged. "We'll worry about that if he catches us in the act. If not, he can take it up with whoever buys you. Maybe he'll repurchase you since you mean that much to him."

"Why don't you just try and sell me to Frieza in the first place?"

With that the woman laughed. "Do you think we're stupid? As if the almighty Frieza would buy anything!"

Vegeta growled in frustration. He had hoped they were stupid. Attempting such a stunt in the first place was pretty stupid.

—

\_If Frieza caught them their race would be extinct for sure. If only I wasn't alone here.\_ Vegeta thought. Suddenly he got an idea.

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\_My scouter. Where did they put it?\_ He crooned his head up to see if they'd left it out in view. \_If they left it on, then someone would've heard and they'll come for me.\_

--

"Looking for something?" The woman asked.

"No." Vegeta replied defensively, like a kid who had just been caught disobeying his parents.

"We destroyed your little device, if that's what you're looking for." She replied with a disdainful chuckle.

With that sentence all his hopes were crushed.

"Face it Kid, we're going to get away with this. Now you know how all those people you killed felt. You knew that you would get away with killing them didn't you? They knew wit too. Just like you know we're going to get away with this. So I guess we did get a little bit of revenge for our Planet, huh? I feel sorry for you, you're such a weak little thing."

"I am not!" Vegeta spat defensively.

"I'm afraid you are."

Vegeta was about to protest the matter further but was stopped by the rest of his captors returning from hunting.

"What took you so long?" Vegeta's guard asked impatiently. "I'm starving."

"You can thank our little prisoner for that. All of the wildlife took off to the other side of the planet. It took us an hour just to locate some prey." The large male of the group said. He was obviously

the leader. His two younger companions, a male and female were hauling the kill.

"Why couldn't you just pick up something he'd killed already?" She demanded.

"I'm not eating something a Saiyan killed. They're filthy vermin."

Vegeta was enraged by such a great insult to his race, and more importantly, to him.

"I'm not filthy and I'm not a vermin! I'm the greatest warrior of my race andâ€¦"

"Which just serves as an example of your status as vermin. A roach would've been harder to catch than you." The leader cut off Vegeta's much longer speech. Vegeta became even more enraged. The muscular alien walked over to the cage and examined him.

"So, you're the greatest Saiyan of all are you?" he smiled mockingly. "I guess that explains why there's only three of you left, you're pathetic."

"YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH THIS! YOU HEAR ME? NEVER!"

All four aliens laughed at his outburst.

"I think somebody takes cartoons a little too seriously." The other female stated as she gutted a carcass.

"It's true! " Vegeta argued almost at the brink of tears. "Frieza will find out and then you'll be sorry." Vegeta cringed at his own statement. He never wanted to rely on Frieza for anything, but right now, he was his only hope.

The aliens continued to laugh at him save the younger male. He did so at first to fit in, but now he was looking quite depressed. He looked over at Vegeta sympathetically, then went back to his work.

Vegeta made some more futile efforts to free himself of his shackles. He was fairly certain he could destroy the cage, but the problem was that the shackles were made out of some indestructible material. Vegeta had seen some before; they were made out of the same material as the armor Frieza's men wore. He'd never imagined that they'd ever be used on him.

Eventually, he gave up exhausted from his struggle and listened to his stomach growl instead. The food his captors were cooking smelled good. Vegeta's lunch had been rudely interrupted. It was evening now and he was so hungry he was nauseated. Saiyans could put up with extreme pain and excruciating physical labor, but they just couldn't stand an empty stomach.

Vegeta tried to ignore them as they ate. The younger female noticed this and came over to him. She dropped a drumstick through the bars of the cage, smiled down at him amused, then left.

Vegeta was frustrated beyond imagination. He'd been provided with food, but his arms were secured behind his back and there was no way

he was going to eat it like an animal.

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\_How dare they tease me! This is too much!\_ Vegeta recommenced his struggle to free himself with renewed enthusiasm.. He wanted to kill them all slowly and painfully.

After the aliens were finished eating, they told the young male to guard the Prince while they retrieved their ship. As soon as they were gone the young man went to Vegeta and picked up the drumstick.

"I'm sorry, I can't take the shackles off, but I can hold this steady for you."

Vegeta was actually thankful for this, but his pride overrode his growling stomach and he turned away from the food. He couldn't stand the thought of being fed.

The youngster sighed and returned the food to the floor.

"I'm sorry you have to go through this."

"I deserve this." Vegeta replied coldly. \_I'm finally being punished for my misdeeds. If I were a stronger person I would have defied Frieza at the start, but back then I had my people to think about. Now, I have nothing.\_

Vegeta acknowledged that he enjoyed making other's suffer. It was the only time he truly felt powerful anymore. Frieza's men were all so much stronger than he was. When he killed helpless inhabitants he somehow felt the way he had on his home on his planet, like the Prince he was. He had the power to dispense mercy or vengeance where he chose, but he never chose mercy. He'd learned through hard lessons that mercy was as unacceptable among Frieza's army as disobedience was.

"I know that Frieza forces you occupy planets. We could have joined him you know? But we fled choosing to be free." He laughed disdainfully. "Turns out we're a more despicable kind of menace than you. We take kids from their families and sell them."

"As slaves"?" Vegeta asked. He himself had been thrown into slavery. Only, it hurt more because his father had consented to it.

"Sometimes. And other times we just sell them to people who can't have kids of their own. We tell them the kids are orphans, but we know the truth. It's a far more ruthless thing to ruin a life than to end it, Vegeta. Those kids have to live with the fact that they've been stolen from the people who love them. The people you killed probably didn't know what hit them."

"That doesn't make it right for me to do it." Vegeta said. He was glad he had the opportunity to voice his emotions to someone. He dared not around Frieza's men or even with Nappa or Raditz. He was expected to be a killer and therefore, acted like a killer, cruel and without remorse.

—

I would have defeated Frieza one day and perhaps ruled the universe myself. I'd do it a lot better than him. But nowâ€¦ now I'll never get that chance!

—

"No, and we're not right either. Just understand that you're not being punished for your actions. You were just trying to survive and that's what we're doing, trying to survive."

That didn't make Vegeta feel any better. He wanted to ask a question but was afraid to. He decided to do it anyway.

"Who do you think will end up getting me?"

The question surprised the boy. He wasn't sure what to answer, but he knew that if he were in the situation his prisoner was, he'd want an honest one.

"I honestly don't know. Either bidder had a good chance but I tend to think he collector has more money then the group of vagabonds. Don't bank on that though. Believe it or not, there are plenty of resources to obtain money in this galaxy for imaginative people."

"Oh," Vegeta replied feeling more hopeless than ever. The thought of being someone's pet was more appealing to him than being tortured. He was Frieza's pet of sorts already anyway.

"Listen, I'll try and talk to my partners about that. They're not as cold â€œhearted as they act, if I push the right buttons they may forget about the other buyer and just sell you to the collector." The young alien said upon hearing the apprehension in Vegeta's voice.

"Thank you." Vegeta said gratefully. He just hoped the boy was as confident as he sounded.

"Don't mention it. You and I are a lot alike. We're kids. The rest of my partners are adults and I have to rely on them for support, and you have to rely on Frieza for support." The young alien said and lay down on the ground beside Vegeta. "If I were in your position, and who knows, I might be someday, I 'd like for someone to try and help me out."

Vegeta actually managed a smile at that. This boy understood him like no one he had ever met before. Vegeta was sure they could have become friends, had the circumstances surrounding their meeting been different.

A loud explosion not too far off startled both boys. A cloud of dark smoke twisted up into the sky and a loud crash followed a few seconds later.

"What could that be?" Vegeta wondered aloud.

"Iâ€¦I think it was our ship." The alien replied. "They should've been almost back by now. What could've caused it to explode?" The boy was obviously shocked and worried. "I wonder if my partners are all



right?"

Vegeta listened intently to the sounds off in the distance. His hearing, accustomed to battle noises, picked up the distinct sound certain attacks gave off. The remainder of his captors were in battle and if they were fighting whom Vegeta thought they were, they weren't likely to return to the camp.

"You should leave, quickly." Vegeta stated to his new friend urgently. He knew that if he was wrong and the other aliens decided to leave the boy for abandoning his post, then Vegeta's future was extremely uncertain. It was uncertain anyway, but with the young alien's promised intervention, at least there was the hope of certainty. But if Frieza's men caught his friend threatening one of their own, he was sure to die a painful death.

"But my comrades?"

"If what I suspect has taken place then you are on your own now. You have to leave now! If Frieza's men catch you here you'll be done for."

"But, what am I going to do?" The boy asked in panick.

Vegeta decided to answer him as honestly as the boy had answered his question earlier.

"I don't know, try to hide. They have scouters and might pick you up though. But I expect they'll free me and I'll resume my job. I'll lie to them, distract them. I'll do anything in order for them not to locate you and when they leave the planet, I'll find you and we'll figure something out together."

The boy smiled. Then it faded. "Won't you get into trouble if you get caught lying though?"

"Don't worry about me, I can handle myself around Frieza's men. I just want to try and help you out like you were trying to help me." Vegeta paused and listened again. "Go, quick! I can hear them getting closer."

The young alien turned and ran into the somewhat destroyed forest. Vegeta hoped he'd be able to distract Frieza's men.

Sure enough, a few minutes later three of Frieza's warriors arrived accompanied by Nappa.

"What the hell?" Nappa exclaimed when he spotted him in the cage. They all set about freeing him. All four of them had trouble getting the shackles off him, which relieved Vegeta. He felt like a weakling not being able to remove them himself.

Nappa turned to Vegeta after he was freed.

"I told these guys something was wrong when the computer said your scouter was off line. You wouldn't believe what I had to do to convince them. Anyway, how exactly did you get into this situation?"

"What's the difference? I'm out of it now." Vegeta replied in an

annoyed tone. Nappa understood that the Prince would tell him later.

"Well, thanks for helping me out." Vegeta said to the three soldiers hoping they'd take the hint and leave.

"Don't mention it, Vegeta. We'll finish up here and you can return to base with Nappa and get fixed up.

> Those aliens were pretty strong, how badly did they get you?"<p>

Vegeta was insulted by their assumption that he'd been seriously injured. If he'd had a chance to fight them, he was sure he'd hold his own fairly well.

"I'm not hurt, I can finish this planet myself. It's only going to take another day." Vegeta needed to remain on the planet. He desperately wanted to help his friend. If those soldiers continued the occupation his friend would be killed for sure.

"Sorry, but it's Frieza's orders. He said to send you back and told us to finish up here. I think he needs you and your two partners to occupy a larger planet for him."

Vegeta sighed in frustration. "All right." He said and reluctantly began to leave. He and Nappa took off into the air and when he was sure the soldiers were no longer watching, he turned to fly in the direction friend had ran. He hoped to find him and still be able to keep his word.

"Vegeta," Nappa said shocked at the Prince's behavior. He was going in the opposite direction of their ships after all. "Frieza is waiting for us."

Vegeta was about to explain to Nappa his motives for disobeying a direct order but decided against it.

—

Frieza will undoubtedly be displeased that I so foolishly allowed myself to be captured. Plus, Nappa is right, it would be unwise for me to keep him waiting. He knows by the scouter transmission that I've been found.

—

Vegeta looked over his shoulder in the direction of the young alien.

—

I'm sorry, my friend. But you understand. I'm only trying to survive.

—

End  
file.